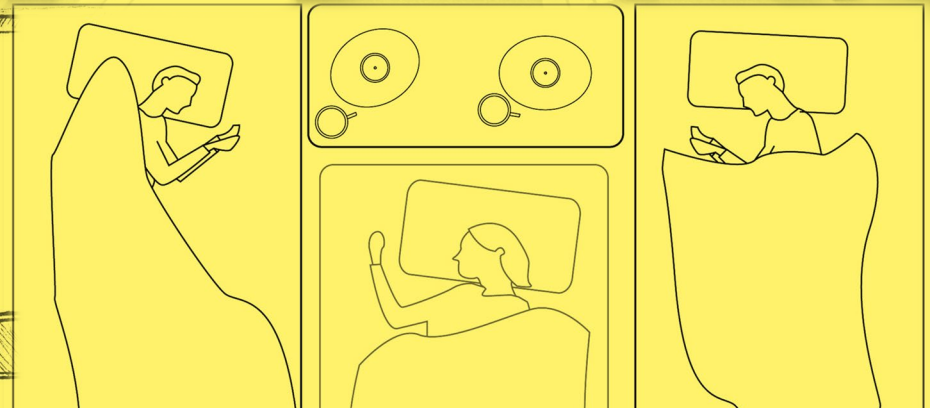


Friday Seminar



SPATIAL AGENCY AND OCCUPATION: MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS IN HONG KONG



APR 10



1:00 - 2:30PM



NAH 213

Dr Evelyn Kwok is an interdisciplinary researcher and educator in design and urban studies. Her research focuses on how marginalised communities engage in creative practices to cultivate a sense of belonging, home and community. Over the last decade, she has engaged in research with migrant domestic workers, which resulted in her first monograph, *Spatial Agency and Occupation: Migrant Domestic Workers in Hong Kong* published by Edinburgh University Press. Her research is published across multiple disciplines including architecture, gender and art activism, urban political economy and social and environmental justice. Storytelling and ethnography play a significant part in Evelyn's research practice.

Spatial Agency and Occupation: migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong (published in November 2024) charts over a decade of research on how migrant domestic workers claim and activate their agency through creative space making. This interdisciplinary research spans across migration labour, gender studies, architecture theory and global political economy. As a spatial design researcher trained in design and architecture school, Evelyn engages with this long-discussed topic through the novel framework of space – the space that is restricted, disciplined and scarce in the domestic sphere, juxtaposed with the 'loose' and available public space that is full of potential for transformation. These private and public spaces inhabited by the workers are visualised in diagrams, maps, sketches and photographs, to add a very real lived-in dimension to the topic beyond ethnographic text-based data. In its essence, this research is about empowerment and foregrounding the lived reality of this contingent of women who have laboured in Hong Kong for over half a century supporting generations of people to thrive economically. It is also about what else is possible for them, when the idea of home is contested and care is an expected service, how does one cultivate a sense of belonging and community, and continue to thrive?

